



Grand Rapids Area  
Chamber of Commerce

To: House Committee on Local, Intergovernmental, and Regional Affairs

From: Andy Johnston  
Vice President, Government Affairs

**Subject: Support for the Municipal Partnership Act**

Date: June 27, 2011

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On behalf of the Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce and our 2,700 members, I offer our support for the Municipal Partnership Act, Senate Bills 8, 9 and 10.

Removing barriers to the sharing of local government services is a long standing Chamber priority. As you know, state laws and regulations must be modified to facilitate the consolidation and sharing of services among local governments. While some municipalities have implemented outstanding partnerships, work must still be done to reduce obstacles for consolidation.

The Municipal Partnership Act will support collaborative municipal service sharing partnerships by setting aside binding arbitration for public safety employees for up to four years and allowing two or more local units of government to enter into a contract to provide services.

In West Michigan, local governments have found hundreds of money-saving ways to work together, but given the significant financial strain our municipalities are under to provide core services and the economic problems facing the state, removing barriers to increased cooperation and sharing of services is critical. The Legislature needs to enact this legislation to demonstrate that a greater sharing of services and skills helps governments achieve economies of scale and realize lower costs.

Many of our municipalities around the state are under severe financial duress and the Municipal Partnership Act is an important step toward easing this burden.

Thank you for your consideration of our position and please and do not hesitate to contact me at (616) 771-0335 if I can be of assistance.

*Connect. Grow.*  
**Succeed!**

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